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SECURITY INFORMATION

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"CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TAIWAN"

I. THE CHINESE COMMUNIST SITUATION

A. What Chinese Communist Forces are now in position for operations against Taiwan?

1. Ground Forces

No contribution

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On File***

2. Air Forces

a. Strength

The Chinese Communist Air Force (CCAF) is estimated to have available a total of approximately 1700 combat aircraft, including about 130 of the North Korean Air Force (NKAF) and approximately 900 jet fighters of undetermined subordination. This aggregate air strength is estimated to include the following: 900 jet fighters, 250 piston fighters, 160 ground attack, 240 light bombers and 150 2-engine transports of various types.

b. Disposition

It is estimated that currently the bulk of the aircraft available to the Chinese Communists are located in Northeastern China Proper and in Manchuria. Communist aircraft presently believed to be based nearest to Taiwan are the following: 37 jet fighters at Canton, 74 jet fighters at Hankow, 74 jet fighters and 40 piston fighters at Shanghai and 80 light bombers at Nanking. Of these, the light bombers

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are the only aircraft within striking distance of Taiwan. A major redeployment of aircraft by the Chinese Communists would be necessary before major air operations against Taiwan could be launched, unless the Communists elected to operate against Taiwan from established bases in Shanghai, Nanking, Hankow and Canton by staging aircraft through prepared airfields on the China mainland opposite Taiwan.

Sufficient usable airfields are available to the Chinese Communists on the China mainland within effective fighter and light bomber range of Taiwan. Within 500 miles of Taiwan (the combat radius of the typical Soviet-type piston light bomber), there are 32 major airfields which are either in operational status or which easily may be brought to a ready condition. Airfields closest to Taiwan are the six major fields in Fukien Province at Nan-tai, Kao-chi, Ma-chiang, Chien-ou, Chang-ting and Swatow, all of which have been improved recently. From these six airfields the Communists could operate jet fighters over the Formosa Straits or Taiwan.

c. Combat Effectiveness

The combat potential and effectiveness of the Communist Air Forces in the China-Manchurian area have improved to the point where they now must be considered as a formidable force. Even by U.S. standards, this force is believed to have reached a fairly high state of training. Experience in Korea has demonstrated that

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the Communists are capable of successful day air interception, however it is believed that the communists have only a slight capability for night intercept and no intercept capability during weather necessitating instrument flight. Numerous reports of intensive training in air-ground attack, bombing, navigation and paratrooper activities indicate that the Chinese Communists are developing a significant capability for other types of air operations. Since Communist China lacks the capability by itself either to develop, or meet the logistic requirements for, an air force, and is dependent upon Soviet assistance, the combat potential and future development of the Communist Air Forces in China rest upon the emphasis which the Soviets place on their operations and continued development. Over-all air capabilities of the Communist Air Forces in China probably will continue to increase since available evidence indicates that the expansion of the role of Communist air power in the Far East is of a continuing nature. Under conditions of prolonged air operations the ability of these air forces to maintain combat effectiveness also would be in direct proportion to the aid rendered by the Soviets.

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d. Airlift Capabilities

Chinese Communist airlift capacity is estimated to be sufficient to carry at least 2700 troops a distance of 500 nautical miles in a single operation. Since Chinese Communist paratrooper and airborne training on a fairly large scale has been reported, the possibility that the Chinese Communists can launch an airborne attack of appreciable magnitude is dependent only upon the acquisition of additional transport aircraft, since both para and airborne troops are believed available in sizeable numbers. Such additional transport aircraft could be readily supplied by the Soviet Union in the event the Communists decided to undertake such an airborne attack. Airfields on the mainland, within transport range of Taiwan, are sufficient to support large-scale airborne operations, if the Communists should elect to undertake them.

3. Naval Forces

No contribution.

B. Under present circumstances (i.e., continuation of the war in Korea, present requirements for internal security, and present scale and nature of Chinese Communist commitment in Southeast Asia) what additional forces could the Chinese Communists make available for an assault on Taiwan?

It is believed that Communists, without an appreciable lessening of the present scale of air operations over North Korea, could make the following aircraft, excluding the NKAF, available for air operations

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against Taiwan by re-deploying such aircraft from present bases in North China and Manchuria: 120 piston fighters, 120 ground attack and 160 light bombers.

C. What gaps are apparent in Chinese Communist capabilities?

In the Mukden-Antung area of southern Manchuria the Chinese Communists presently possess a major air defense capability against daylight air attacks. At night, however, their air defense capabilities in that area would be considerably less due to their slight ground controlled interception ability. Chinese Communist air defense capabilities for China Proper are considerably less due to a greater area and fewer available aircraft. In areas where distance prevents immediate jet air reinforcements, i.e., Shanghai and Canton, the defensive capability of the small jet strengths presently allocated to those areas is considered negligible as against a major daylight air attack or night missions.

The rapid development of the CCAF is entirely due to Soviet assistance and the CCAF is dependent on the Soviet Union for logistical support, including aircraft, fuel supplies, armament and ammunition. The ability of the CCAF to develop and expand its capabilities for air operations is in direct proportion to the assistance given by the Soviets. It is within the Soviet capability to augment and re-equip the Chinese Communist air strength from the Soviet Air Forces in the Far East or elsewhere or from new Soviet production. It is estimated that the Soviet Far East Air Force currently has approximately 5,500 aircraft, including four-engine medium bombers and an increasing proportion of jet fighters. Within a relatively short period of time a portion of this air strength could be made available for operations in China. Available evidence indicates that the over-all capabilities of the CCAF probably will continue to be increased by the Soviets.

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- D. On the basis of points A, B, and C above, what could be the scale and nature of a maximum Chinese Communist effort to the end of 1952?

1. Strength and Composition

It is estimated that the Chinese Communists, without appreciably lessening the present scale of air operations over North Korea, could re-deploy the following presently available aircraft for air support of a maximum Chinese Communist effort against Taiwan: 185 jet fighters, 160 piston fighters, 120 ground attack, 240 light bombers and a substantial portion of the 150 available transports. This air strength could be augmented by additional aircraft furnished by the Soviet Union within this period.

In the event that cease-fire negotiations in Korea fail and fighting in Korea is expanded to include UN air attacks against targets in China Proper and/or Manchuria it is believed probable that the Communist capability for air operations against Taiwan would vary inversely with the intensity and duration of such attacks.

In the event of an armistice, and should the Communists be willing to leave Manchuria without fighter defense, the entire air strength available to the Communist in China could be re-deployed to prepared airfields in South China with little delay. It is believed that the problems involved in the supply and movement of avgas and other essential requirements would not preclude Chinese Communist air operations against Taiwan.

2. Most feasible season for utilization of this force

It is believed that the determining weather factors will be those favoring large-scale sea operations across the Taiwan Straits rather than those directly related to air operations. It is believed that the Chinese Communists, if they decided to make an assault on Taiwan, would be most likely to attack in the spring or summer, when weather and sea conditions in the Taiwan Straits are most favorable.

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3. Capability for achieving surprise

It is believed that a limited air attack against Taiwan could be conducted by the CCAF from present bases, staging through advance airfields opposite Taiwan, with a maximum degree of surprise. However, it is believed that further indications (such as additional re-deployment of aircraft and stockpiling of aviation fuel and supplies at mainland airfields opposite Taiwan) would be available prior to the launching of a major sustained air offensive by the Communist against Taiwan.

4. Capability for reinforcement and resupply

Communist China does not possess an aviation industry and is wholly dependent on imports for aircraft frames, engines, spare parts, and other aviation equipment. In addition, Communist China is dependent on imports for 100 per cent of her avgas requirement of 140,000 metric tons per year. Although it is possible that the Chinese Communist may be able to produce at least a part of her jet fuel requirements of 60,000 metric tons annually, no exact estimate of jet fuel production capabilities is possible. Communist China, therefore, is virtually completely dependent upon the Soviet Union and her satellites for both aviation equipment and supplies. However, the Soviet Union and her satellites have the potential to reinforce and resupply the CCAF. Since aviation equipment and supplies must be imported from the Soviet Union, it is reasonable to assume that, particularly if operations continue unchanged in Korea or there is an expansion of hostilities, CCAF air operations against Taiwan, with the greater logistical requirements incidental thereto, will necessitate a proportionate decrease in the capabilities of over-burdened lines of

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communication into China from the Soviet Union, and from North China into the South China coastal area opposite Taiwan, to transport other necessary military materials. However, if the Communists place a sufficiently high priority upon importations for the reinforcement and resupply of the CCAF, operations of the CCAF against Taiwan would not necessarily be affected by this dependency on imports and the limited lines of communication available. Adequate stockpiling of aviation equipment and supplies in South China in advance could alleviate much of this logistic difficulty for the CCAF in the event of sustained air operations against Taiwan.

E. What are Chinese Communist capabilities for infiltration of Taiwan prior to the assault?

The CCAF has the capability of attempting clandestine drops of personnel and/or supplies, prior to a large scale amphibious assault, in connection with attempts by the Communists to infiltrate Taiwan. In addition, the CCAF has the capability to transport and drop paratroopers on Taiwan to sabotage and destroy key points on lines of communication and military installations immediately prior to such an assault.

II. The Chinese Nationalist Situation

A. What is the strength, disposition, composition, and combat effectiveness of the Chinese Nationalist Air Force?

The Chinese Nationalist Air Force (CNAF) has 320 aircraft in tactical units. Of these, 118 are piston fighters and 36 light bombers and the balance are transport and reconnaissance aircraft. All these aircraft are US World War II types. There are no jet aircraft in the

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CNAF. The over-all personnel strength of the CNAF totals 67,393 including 1628 trained active pilots.

Adequate air facilities exist on this island to accommodate all tactical units of the CNAF, with several undeveloped bases which could be used as dispersal fields. Taiwan has a total of 19 air facilities (including two seaplane stations) in various stages of use at this time. Of these fields, 12 have runways at least 4800 in length. In addition, the CNAF has an airfield on the off-shore island of Quemoy (Chimpen) near the mainland coastal city of Amoy.

The combat effectiveness of the CNAF is considered to be very low in relation to the CCAF. Principal deficiencies of the CNAF at the present time are lack of jet aircraft, lack of combat experience and training, poor maintenance and shortage of equipment and spare parts.

The CNAF, with the ¹¹⁸218 piston fighters presently in tactical units, is estimated to be capable of mounting a maximum air defense effort of 310 sorties during an initial 24 hour period or 59 sorties per day for a sustained 30 day operation. As opposed to this the CCAF, with the aircraft estimated to be available in ID1 above, is estimated to be capable of mounting the following air effort from airfields in Fukien Province within operating radius of Taiwan:

Type	No.	Sorties Initial (24 hours)	Sustained 30 day operation
Jet Ftrs	185	500	90
Piston Ftrs	160	425	80
Ground Attack	120	315	60
Light Bombers	240	630	120
Transport	150	370	75

Sortie capabilities for both air forces are based on an average of three missions during the initial 24-hour period with maximums of 90% service-

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ability (after paratary stand down) and attrition rates of 1.5% for piston fighters, 1.8% for light bombers, 1.8% for attack aircraft, and 9% for transport (assault). The maximum sustained combat rate is estimated to be 15 sorties per month per plane for all types in both air forces listed above. No attrition rate is applied for sustained operations since it is assumed that combat losses will be compensated for by replacement aircraft. No combat attrition factor has been applied to decrease estimated CCAF jet fighter sorties since they will not be opposed by jet fighters in the CNAF.

The combat attrition of the CNAF piston fighters has been computed on the basis of piston type opposition; it is believed that if the CNAF piston fighters encounter CCAF jets the combat effectiveness of the former would be reduced to an insignificant level within a short period. In view of the foregoing, the CNAF is not considered capable of providing an effective air defense for Taiwan against air attacks the CCAF could mount from the China mainland.

B. What are the factors in the political and economic situation on Taiwan that affect the capabilities of the CNAF? How do these factors affect the CNAF?

The Commanding General of the CNAF, General Chou Chih Jou, is also Chief of the General Staff of the Chinese Nationalist Ministry of

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National Defense. General Chou holds these positions concurrently because of his political power and prestige rather than because of any particular preferential CNAF politico-military position or regular rotation policy. Because of the efforts of General Chou, the CNAF suffers less from the influence of political control than the other armed services. No significant factionalism is known to exist within the CNAF. The general level of education and background of CNAF personnel, combined with a good esprit de corps, causes the CNAF to easily lead the other services in morale and technical know-how. In addition, since the arrival in May 1951 of the US Military Aid Advisory Group the morale of the CNAF has been boosted noticeably. Political factors, therefore, currently appear to favor the development of the CNAF.

Nationalist China alone, from the economic standpoint, could not develop, or meet the requirements of, an air force of any significance. Prior to the allocation of US military aid to the CNAF, one of its most glaring deficiencies consisted in a shortage of equipment and spare parts necessary for maintaining its obsolescent aircraft and a serious fuel shortage which prevented maximum utilization of available combat type aircraft. The air section of the MAAG now in Taiwan is currently investigating these deficiencies with a view to their correction. With presently programmed US military aid, these and other equipment and logistic deficiencies of the CNAF should be largely overcome by the end of 1952. Accordingly, in view of such US aid, Chinese Nationalist economic difficulties should not have a significant adverse effect on the development of the CNAF.

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- C. What is the scope and nature of the Chinese Communist subversive effort on Taiwan? How does this effort affect CNAF capabilities to defend Taiwan?

The Chinese Nationalist Government has taken far-reaching steps to guard against Chinese Communist sabotage on Taiwan through strict surveillance and drastic methods. As a result, the Communists are believed incapable of effecting significant subversion or sabotage on Taiwan, prior to the successful initiation of a large-scale Communist invasion of the island.

It is believed that personnel of the CNAF are generally less susceptible to subversion than members of the other armed services. Among the factors making for a higher resistance to Communism among the personnel of the CCAAF are carefully selected personnel with a superior standard of education and intelligence, and good morale fostered by better food, pay, treatment, and easier living conditions.

Chinese Communist subversive activity on Taiwan, therefore, should not significantly affect CNAF defensive capabilities.

III. Prospects for Success of a Chinese Communist Assault on Taiwan.

- A. What are CNAF capabilities to defend Taiwan?

1. Against a maximum Chinese Communist effort?

It is not believed that the CNAF would, now or by the end of 1952, be capable of providing an effective air defense for Taiwan against air attacks the CCAAF could mount from the China mainland. Principal deficiencies in present CNAF defensive capabilities to repel possible CCAAF air attacks are the lack of jet aircraft, inadequate early warning and aircraft control systems, logistic shortages, and antiquated anti-aircraft defense equipment.

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Aircraft available for defense are US World War II fighter types. Because of lack of spare parts and poor maintenance, CNAF air operations could be sustained at maximum levels only for a period of short duration. Although the CNAF has acquired and installed some US World War II type radar, the CNAF is not considered to possess at this time an effective early warning radar net or aircraft intercept system. At present no ground controlled interception (GCI) as such is practiced by the CNAF and there is a serious time lag in transmitting information from the early warning radar station to the pilot of the intercepting aircraft. The CNAF is not considered to have an effective anti-aircraft defense system and its anti-aircraft equipment consists of an assortment of obsolete non-standard weapons with limited ammunition stocks.

2. Against limited surprise attacks?

It is not believed that the CNAF would, now or by the end of 1952, be capable of providing an effective air defense for Taiwan against a limited surprise air attack by the CCAF from the China mainland. The CNAF is vulnerable to a surprise attack due to the proximity of its air bases to airfields which the CCAF could use for launching or staging such an air attack, and by reason of the deficiencies in the Taiwan air defenses. Such deficiencies are due primarily to the availability only of obsolescent aircraft for interception, an inadequate early warning system, a lack of ground controlled interception and poor anti-aircraft equipment. It is believed that the CCAF possesses the capability to

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neutralize the CNAF by such a limited surprise air attack. It is noted that at the present time a considerable number of Communist piston fighters and light bombers are based in the Shanghai-Nanking area and that the Communists, by utilizing only these aircraft, possess a capability to launch escorted light bomber attacks against Taiwan, staging the shorter range aircraft through advance prepared airfields opposite Taiwan, without delays incident to redeployment. Such an attack could inflict serious damage to CNAF aircraft on the ground if accomplished with a maximum degree of surprise.

B. What is the scope and nature of assistance the CNAF would require for the successful air defense of Taiwan?

The CNAF has the organizational structure and necessary personnel, including in excess of 1600 trained active pilots, to absorb and utilize additional equipment to improve its effectiveness as a defensive force.

Currently the US is furnishing air aid to the CNAF under the mutual defense assistance programs and has sent a Military Aid Advisory Group, containing a large air section, to supervise this aid with a view to increasing the combat value of the CNAF. Under the present program spare parts and related aviation equipment are being supplied initially to Taiwan and, next in priority, the presently organized fighter groups are to be equipped with piston type fighters during 1952. It is anticipated that the effect of this US aid will, within a period of two years, cause the combat value of the CNAF to rise from its present low point to a point where its combat potential will make the CNAF AN

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effective component of an integrated defense organization. However, it is not believed that the CNAF could be developed sufficiently during 1952 to enable it to successfully defend Taiwan against large-scale Communist air operations without direct participation by US air units.

IV. How do the Following Factors Influence Chinese Communist Actions With Respect to Taiwan?

A. Over-all Soviet Policy

The Chinese Communist regime has demonstrated its ideological subservience to over-all Soviet or international Communist policy, particularly respecting actions outside of China Proper. In addition, the Chinese Communists are almost completely dependent upon the Soviet Union for continuing technical and material assistance in order to acquire control of Taiwan. Although over-all Soviet policy certainly favors eventual Communist acquisition of Taiwan for strategic reasons, it might well give such acquisition a lower priority than Chinese Communist considerations alone might dictate.

B. Present US policy vis-a-vis Taiwan

The present US policy of protecting Taiwan from Communist attack and of giving military aid to the Chinese Nationalist forces acts as a strong deterrent to Chinese Communist military action against Taiwan but also makes the island--as a potential anti-Communist military base--a still more important prize for the Chinese Communists.

C. Possible US counter-action (e.g. attacks against mainland targets)

As long as Korean hostilities continue, the presence of US naval forces in Taiwan waters with publicly known orders to resist Commu-

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nist military action against the island will probably deter the Chinese Communists from initiating such action. In the event of a cessation of the Korean hostilities, the influence of any possible US counter-action upon Chinese Communist actions respecting Taiwan would depend upon the degree to which the Chinese Communists (and the Soviets) were convinced of the certainty of such US counter-action, under the changed circumstances.

D. The Korean situation

1. Tactical

A continuation of Korean air operations on the present scale would not, of itself, prevent the Chinese Communists from employing sufficient air strength against Taiwan to acquire and maintain air superiority in that area against the present CNAF.

2. Truce negotiations

The truce negotiations have not had the effect of reducing the capability of the CCAF for action against Taiwan; on the contrary, the CCAF strength has steadily increased during the period of the truce talks. However, as long as the Communists desire to continue the present negotiations or to participate in post-armistice political discussions, political considerations would probably militate against the employment of air strength or other armed forces against Taiwan.

E. Possible reactions in non-Communist areas in the Far East

It is estimated that reactions in non-Communist areas in the Far East to Chinese Communist military action against Taiwan, although

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at least partially unfavorable, would not constitute a deterrent to the taking of such action.

V. What are the Indications of Chinese Communist Intentions with Respect to Taiwan?

A. Military preparations

There are no definite indications that increasing military activity in Southeast China is directed toward an early attack on Taiwan. During recent weeks there has been some build-up of jet fighter strength at Shanghai and Hankow and of light bombers at Nanking. There is evidence that the six major airfields in the coastal area of Fukien Province opposite Taiwan have been improved recently. This air activity could be in preparation for an invasion of Taiwan, or could indicate, especially in the case of the jet fighter build-up, an effort on the part of the Communists to increase their capabilities for air defense in Southeast China.

B. Domestic propaganda

C. Foreign propaganda

D. UN negotiations

E. Other

No contributions.

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VI. What are Chinese Communist Intentions with Respect to Taiwan ?

Available intelligence does not indicate an intention on the part of the Chinese Communists to launch large-scale air attacks against Taiwan. However, the known redeployment of certain air units from the Korean theater to potential rear base areas in China Proper and the estimated availability of additional air elements for redeployment indicates a Chinese Communist capability for limited air operations against Taiwan which could be accomplished with little warning.

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